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## V. ART

### Sculpture and Painting

532 517 In the field of native art the Tukuna have not only preserved the traditions of their ancestors but have even developed them. Above all, the Tukuna have a curious bent toward sculpture. An Indian, seeing a large, misshapen tree trunk floating near the edge of a lake, will repair to his canoe, lay hands on his hatchet, and give the log the outlines of an enormous alligator. Observing a rounded termites' nest hanging from a high branch bent over the igapó, he will stop, climb up with his machete, and, with perilous acrobatics, transform it into the horrid grimace of a demon. Any knot on a thick tree trunk within reach of his hands invariably receives similar treatment. A Tukuna rubber gatherer I once saw had decorated his smoking hearth with plastic figures of animals. (See p. 48.)

The sculptured figures of men and women (pl. 9, *b*) made of muirapiranga, an extremely heavy wood, toys for children, and so forth, are not very artistic; but one finds among the representations of animals (pl. 9, *c*, *d*) very handsome works of art, starting with small stools in the form of turtles or bats. The Tukuna taste for sculpture, however, is displayed more strikingly in two classes of objects: dance staves and necklaces of figurines from tucumã palm nuts.

532 293 The dance staves (dɔ:'pa), made of a light, white wood and from one to one and a half meters long, are used at ceremonies, the same staff never being used on two occasions. They are carried over the left shoulder; the lower end generally has a hook or button from which is suspended a small drum to be struck with the right hand. The upper part of the staff, which rests on the shoulder, has usually four planed surfaces and is decorated by one or more carved figures, interspersed with geometric designs, the whole being painted in bright colors (pl. 14, *a–f*).

532 301 The figurines of the necklaces are carved of tucumã palm nuts (*Astrocaryum* sp.), generally tucumã piranga, but sometimes ordinary tucumã or anajá nuts (*Maximiliana regia*) are used. The first two have a surface of brilliant jet, the third is a clear, brown color. The figures are of men firing with a shotgun, women with children, a girl in the puberty-ceremony costume, pairs of dancers, or an infinity of animals, from the crab louse (*úra*) to the jaguar. These little figurines, separated only by rows of seeds or glass beads, make very striking necklaces (pl. 13).

532 463 In the Igarapé de São Jeronymo there are a brother and sister, Flavio pi'ë and Raimunda ç'kɨrane, thirty and thirty-five years old, respectively, who are the best artists in this line. Their products are sought by neighboring Indians and by those of other igarapés, where their motifs are later imitated. Raimunda does not limit herself to copying live models; she showed me a goodly number of figurines which were pure fantasy, and others which she "saw in a dream." For his part, pi'ë likes to reproduce motifs seen in prints of civilized origin. Thus, he carved a dragon, the trade-mark of a certain marketed product, and the United States eagle, complete with the shield of stars and stripes on its breast.

531 The Tukuna produce far less painting than sculpture, partly because of their extremely primitive technique, for the Tukuna have not yet invented or adopted

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The sewing is done with an eyed bone needle and tucum thread. For certain types of disguises, trouser legs are made from the same piece, and sleeves of attached pieces are obligatory. Some forms cover the wearer from the head to the middle of the calf with one section. Some of these also have sleeves, others only lateral openings through which the arms are thrust. In still others the wearer's arms remain within the garment, being held close to the body and invisible. Those which do not cover the head are closed about the neck by a threaded string; the garments covering the head have the face represented in the appropriate place on the same piece. The costumes with the head fashioned as a separate section have a kind of cap or sack of tururí that covers the entire head to the breast.

In manufacturing face masks, no matter what the design may be, the Tukuna seem to vie with one another in producing the most horrible countenances, with cheeks of black pitch from the *unaní* (*Moronobea* sp.), protuberant eyes of mirror fragments (formerly bits of mother-of-pearl), great, circular, protruding ears, an enormous, hooked or pointed nose, and a distorted mouth with huge, threatening teeth.

Other masks simply have a face painted on the tururí. Further, a few face masks carved of wood (for example, those which represent the sun) have pleasant, human features. Still other masks cover only the head to the torso with one piece, but enlarge the stature of the invisible wearer to the height of two and a half meters by means of a body woven of uarumã strips that rests on the bearer's shoulders. This type ends in an artificial head, which always represents some animal, and never the grimace of a demon.

All the costumes, whether they end in trouser legs or a skirt, have at the hem fringes of envira de matamatá or tururí, which fall to, or almost to, the ground.

The most characteristic motifs represented are the following:

ɔ'ma, the demon of the wind. (Pl. 16, *a*.) The costume is always of red tururí, with legs and sleeves and with few designs. It is equipped with an erect phallus a half meter in length, slightly conical in shape, and testicles the size of a closed fist. It is with this phallus that Wind knocks down the trees of the jungle. The face mask is enormous, seventy centimeters or more in length, and of corresponding width. The ears are almost a half meter in diameter. I also saw one costume that had on its head an enormous bush of vines and second-growth plants which made it even more disproportionate. In his hand ɔ'ma bears a globular whistle (pl. 16, *d*) with an attached air tube, made of a small calabash and a bamboo tube, the whole covered with tururí. With this instrument, which produces a low, mournful cry, he imitates the noise of a storm. Especially when the hour approaches to hand over the mask, ɔ'ma attacks the spectators with his phallus, particularly the men, since the women soon flee, and tries to knock them down during the pursuit. If he turns against the women, it may happen that one of the more resolute, amid general hilarity, will seize and hold him by the phallus. Speaking in Portuguese to the Neobrazilians, the Tukuna call ɔ'ma the "Mother [!] of the Wind."

lëru', the female butterfly demon. (Pl. 17, *b*.) This demon is also represented in a red tururí costume with sleeves and trouser legs. On the chest are painted the elongated breasts that characterize her. On the outside of both sleeves is a wheel of cipó, 60 cm. in diameter and covered with tururí, representing the wings. The face mask, however, is much smaller than that of the preceding costume. The nose is fashioned of a spiraled strip of liana, in imitation of a butterfly's proboscis.

dyë'vaë, the water demon. (Pl. 16, *c*.) This figure is 2.6 m. tall, not counting the feelers. It has neither arms nor legs. The head, which resembles that of a catfish, has a mouth opened upward and is garnished with long feelers.

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292 776 532 **ma'vi, the araparyrana tree. (Pl. 18, b.) The fruits of this tree have an odor and anciently had an agreeable taste, since lost because the culture hero *e'pi* dropped them into curare before leaving the earth. The costume of red or white tururí, which sometimes has sleeves but never trouser legs, covers the wearer from head to foot. The faceless head is conical and has on top a plume of uarumã strips to the tips of which are attached small white placques of burity frond-stalks, rhomboid or divided, which represent the fruit of the araparyrana. The characteristic ornament of the costume consists of a painted, toothed ĵ, simple or double. A rod is carried in** [534] **the right hand, while the left holds a long, slim bamboo whistle introduced into the mouth through a small orifice in the tururí; today this whistle is almost always replaced by the long stem of a papaya leaf.**

**čavĵ', maize. (Pl. 17, *a*.) The outfit, of white tururí painted with vertical stripes, has no face, no arms, and no legs. The conical head ends in a tuft representing a corn tassel. Two imitations of ears of corn are attached to each side, one about the height of the elbow, the other just below.**

**tɔĵ', caiarára monkey (*Cebus albifrons*) (pl. 18, *a*) and taikĵrẽ', prego monkey (*Cebus fatuellus*) (pl. 18, *c*) are the two commonest types of costumes. Individually, the representation differs greatly, and in neither can one distinguish the animals whose names the represented demons bear, except that one or the other is shown with a phallus in the shape characteristic of the species. The faces are always diabolical; the garments, of red or white tururí, have no trouser legs and rarely have sleeves, the arms protruding through lateral openings.**

292 [177] 293 [534] **The imagination of the wearers has free play in the ornamental painting of the tururí, so that one observes modern airplanes represented side by side with traditional designs. These outfits are characterized by rattles suspended by wooden hooks, or on fantastically long and thick spears, or even on a smooth stick of wood 25 cm. in length by 2 cm. in diameter; with these the masqueraders rhythmically beat against the hooks. Once I saw nine of these masqueraders holding a log as thick as a man's arm horizontally before them, with which they beat out the measure. Another carried a handful of slim, pointed rods of anajá ribs or similar material, which he threw, two or three at a time, like assegais, against the wall of the girl's seclusion room, where they remained sticking. The spectators shouted for him to throw them at the figure of the deer painted on the wall.**

881 **These tɔĵ' masqueraders always comport themselves in a very impetuous, cocky manner, beating on the house thatch before entering, and galloping furiously to and fro through the center of the festive house, with no regard for those who may be inside. After a while they present themselves in a threatening attitude before the jars, demanding drink, some of the tɔĵ' giving in exchange "their son" (pl. 16, *d*),** [524] **a doll of tururí in more or less human form with a demon's face, which is carried suspended from the backs and which after the feast serves as a plaything of the little girls.**

[415] **Those who have a face mask in one piece with the body costume drink by means of the tube of a papaya leafstalk. Afterward they again race off to disappear in the jungle, where they remove and store their masks; they never rest or sit down while in the house. As soon as a masked dancer, regardless of his type, enters the house, a few persons, sometimes even the owner or his wife, array themselves behind him and, holding on to his costume, accompany him in his mad career through the dwelling; to escort the taikĵrẽ' or tɔĵ' thus is no simple matter, but it forms the favorite entertainment of the older children of both sexes. Probably this is what Spix meant to show in his plate with the two little girls holding the fringes of the masquerader in front of the rest.**

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754 including the slayers, who had arrived that morning, horribly painted with black
682 from head to foot. The atmosphere was rather anxious, and their satisfaction at seeing me so unexpectedly was obvious, especially on Nino's part; if I had not come, they would have searched for me the following day at Igarapé de São Jeronymo, where I made my headquarters. Calmly and clearly Nino told me what had happened: "We had to do it. But now that it is done I don't want to fool with anyone else, just live in peace," he said. But naturally the case was not closed.

The civilized authorities, though aware of what had happened, made no move, but a brother of the dead man, informed by another relative, came from the outskirts of Belém with his three grown sons in pursuit of the slayers. Strangely enough, the party first came ashore at the place of another brother of Nino and Christovão who lived by himself on the banks of the Solimões, and he immediately sent to warn his kinsman. It is clear that if the sorcerer's brother had come to avenge u'iru's death immediately, he would not have pulled ashore at the house of the murderers' brother.

However, Nino, Christovão, and Hippolyto passed the night together with loaded shotguns and machetes at hand. The night was absolutely dark. About nine o'clock, when I rashly went down to the landing, accompanied by Nino's three sons, we saw slowly approaching from the river a small light, resembling the lighted cigarette of a person silently rowing inshore; it finally stopped. Frightened, the children ran to the house while I went down to the landing, where I discovered that the light was due to a large firefly that had lit on one of the canoes inshore.

I turned back with the insect in my hand, when all the Indians in the house came from all sides to meet me, for they were terrified at my unheard-of audacity. The
[774] point was the arrival of a sorcerer's soul is announced in the dark by a small
● [293] firefly-like light that emanates from the tucum-nut ring the sorcerer, like most Tukuna, wears on his finger. My attitude in abstaining from all criticism or moral
[123] judgment and in accepting the tragedy as a consummated fact visibly cleared the atmosphere and calmed their spirits. When I returned to Igarapé de São Jeronymo on the following day, the situation was almost back to normal.

In fact, until my departure in September nothing untoward occurred. However, I believe that the brother of the murdered u'iru will still try to avenge him at the first opportunity.

*Another method of purification.*—According to what he himself told me, Calixto
783 daueru'kj, to whom also killers repair for purification, has a method slightly dif-
775 ferent from that of his colleague Geraldo. First he washes the slayer's arms from top to bottom with envira de matamatá. Then he invokes the soul of the slain, by means of a song and tobacco smoke. The dead man's soul, surrounded by the smoke, which it involuntarily swallows, finally crouches down, weak and inoffensive, before the shaman, who covers it with still more smoke and, fanning the smoke, makes the soul disappear. Afterward he paints with genipapo dye only the forearms of the killer. Even with this, however, the dead man's soul is not completely annihilated. Thus, after the death of ču'na, a Peruvian sorcerer who had fled to Brazil, where he was killed by pursuers from his own country, his soul "shot" his brother-in-law with "arrows," a fact recognized by the shaman Airú of Ilha dos Guaribas, who succeeded in curing the sufferer.

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PLATE 14

Dance staves and musical instruments. *e–f*. Dance staves. *g*. ba:'/ma. *h–j*. Drums. × 1/12.

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a b c d e f

[534]

g h i j

DANCE STAVES AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

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PLATE 16

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[534]

Masquerade costumes and accessories. *a*. ɔ̃ma, the demon of the wind. *b*. Otter. *c*. dyɛ̃vaɛ̃. *d*. ɔ̃ma's whistle (left); "son" of tajʼ (right). *d*, × ⅙.

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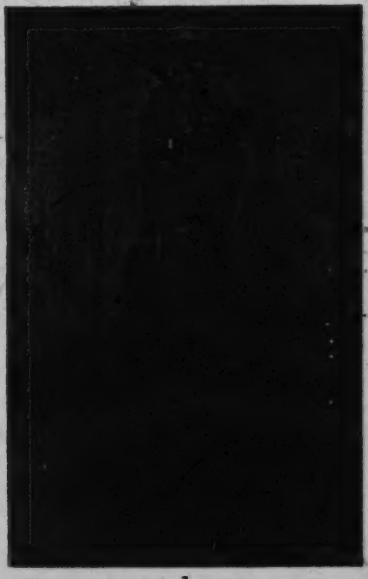
a



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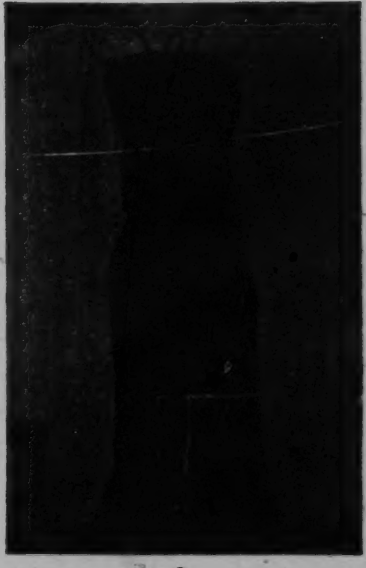
[534]



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[P.201]

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a

b

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c

MASQUERADE COSTUMES